

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 OMB-01 L-03 TRSE-00 COME-00
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P R 311423Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5172
USDA WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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ATHENS FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, BU, US
SUBJECT: PROPOSED JOINT STATEMENT ON AGRICULTURE

REF: STATE 205244

1. EMBASSY OFFICERS MET WITH DIMITUR ANDREEVSKI, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIRECTOR, AT MINAG ON AUG 24 TO PRESENT US COMMENTS ON BULGARIAN DRAFT. FOLLOWING ARE SPECIFIC REACTIONS HE WAS ABLE TO OFFER.

A. JOINT STATEMENT VS. AGREEMENT: BULGARIANS STILL FEEL THAT, SINCE THEY WERE AGREEING TO UNDERTAKE CERTAIN COMMITMENTS VIS-A-VIS US, AND SINCE SUCH DEALINGS WITH OTHER STATES HAD ALWAYS BEEN IN THE FORM OF AGREEMENTS, THEY PREFERRED TO MAKE THIS AN AGREEMENT RATHER THAN A JOINT STATEMENT. HOWEVER, ANDREEVSKI'S RESPONSE WAS NOT ABSOLUTE, AND HE AGREED TO CONSULT WITH RESPONSIBLE BULGARIAN OFFICIALS ON THIS MATTER.

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B. ONE STUMBLING BLOCK WAS THE RELUCTANCE OF MINISTRY TO ACCEPT WORD "TRADE" IMMEDIATELY AFTER PREAMBLE. ANDREEVSKI HARPED ON POINT THAT ONLY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE HAS COMPETENCE IN THIS FIELD AND, IF ACCORD IS TO BE SIGNED BY RESPECTIVE AGRICULTURE MINISTERS, MINAG HAD NO AUTHORITY TO COMMIT ITSELF ON TRADE. HOWEVER, EMBOFFS SUGGESTED THAT, SINCE TRADE WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO

RUS AND SINCE WORD TRADE WAS USED IN ARTICLE 2 OF THE BULGARIAN DRAFT, BULGARIANS COULD ACCEPT ITS INCLUSION IN PREAMBLE, WORKING OUT IN SOME FASHION THE QUESTION OF INTERNAL MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES. WE ALSO SAID WE ASSUMED THAT FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY WOULD BE IN ACTIVE CONSULTATION WITH AGMIN RE PROPOSED STATEMENT.

C. ARTICLE 2: WE SUGGESTED SUBSTITUTION OF WORD "FACILITATE" FOR "NORMALIZE", LEST BULGARIANS LATER INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN WE HAD COMMITTED OURSELVES TO REMOVING WHAT BULGARIANS CALL "OBSTACLES" TO ITS TRADE WITH US. ANDREEVSKI CONCURRED, AND INDICATED THE GOB WOULD BUY THE CHANGE.

D. REMOVAL OF WORD "CONTRACTING" FROM CONTRACTING PARTIES: ANDREEVSKI REPEATED THAT THIS WAS STANDARD FORMULATION BULGARIANS USED IN DEALINGS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, REFERRED TO THE TWO AGRICULTURE MINISTRIES, BUT WOULD TAKE OUR VIEWS INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN CONSULTING HIS SUPERIORS.

E. TRAVEL EXPENSES: WE EXPLAINED THAT USDA HAS NO AUTHORITY TO PAY FOR EXPENSES OF BULGARIANS COMING TO US. HOWEVER, BULGARIANS RAISED POINT THAT THEY ALWAYS DEALT IN SPECIALIST EXCHANGES ON THIS BASIS IN ORDER TO AVOID PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN CURRENCY TRANSFER AND, IN ANY EVENT, WANTED FINANCIAL DETAILS SPELLED OUT. WE REPLIED THAT WE WOULD CONSULT WASHINGTON RE OTHER POSSIBILITIES.
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RE ANNEX: ANDREEVSKI COMMENTED

THAT AGRICULTURE IS LIKE A "FACTORY UNDER AN OPEN SKY" AND THAT BULGARIANS WERE RELUCTANT TO MAKE CROP FORECASTS GIVEN THE MANY IMPOUNDABLES THAT WOULD THROW THE RESULT OUT OF KILTER AND, WHEN PRESSED, SAID THAT THE GOB WOULD NOT PROVIDE USG WITH SUCH INFORMATION. HE SEEMED MORE AMENABLE TO POSSIBILITIES OF PROVIDING MORE TIMELY AND DETAILED BREAKDOWNS ON OUTPUT STATISTICS, SAYING HE WOULD CONSULT WITH THIS.

2. ANDREEVSKI ALSO TOOK NOTE OF OUR INTEREST IN ASSURING PROPER ROLE FOR PRIVATE US INSTITUTIONS IN EXCHANGE, INCLUDING UNIVERSITIES AND PRIVATE PRODUCERS, AND ESPECIALLY QUESTION OF ACCESS TO BULGARIAN END USERS. ONE PROBLEM IS QUESTION OF LIMITING STATEMENT TO ONE BETWEEN TWO MINISTRIES OR TO THE TWO MINISTERS ON BEHALF OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES.

3. MINAG WILL TAKE UNDER ADVISEMENT OTHER CHANGES SUGGESTED BY EMBASSY ON BASIS OF REFTEL, INCLUDING SUBSTITUTING OUR ARTICLE 4 FOR BULGARIAN ARTICLE 3, PLACING

BULGARIAN ARTICLE 6 AFTER ARTICLES 7 AND 8, AND ADDING

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LANGUAGE ONINFOVWIONSXCHANGES. WE WILL BE IN TOUCH
WITH MINAG WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS AND WILL TRY TO ARRANGE
NEXT WORKING SESSION PROMPTLY.

4. COMMENT: BASIC QUESTION STILL TO BE RESOLVED IS
WHETHER BULGARIANS WILL COME FORWARD WITH ENOUGH TO MAKE
PROPOSED STATEMENT A TWO-WAY DOCUMENT WITH GENUINE GAINS
FOR US INTERESTS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL BEFORE OUR
NEXT SESSION TO HAVE WASHINGTON GUIDANCE ON FOLLOWING
POINTS:

A. RE PARA 1A, ARE WE WILLING TO CONSIDER CALLING
DOCUMENT "AGREEMENT" RATHER THAN "JOINT STATEMENT?"
SHOULD WE INTRODUCE THE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE OF "PROTOCOL"
(PER STATE 17763)? IF WE COULD MORE NEARLY SATISFY THE
BULGARIANS ON THE DOCUMENT'S TITLE, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT
WE COULD PERSUADE THEM TO BE MORE AMENABLE TO SOME OF OUR
REQUESTS SUCH AS MEANINGFUL STATISTICS IN THE ANNEX.

B. RE PARA 1E, TRAVEL EXPENSES, PLEASE ADVISE WHETHER
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IV PROGRAM COULD BE USED AS VEHICLE FOR PAYING BULGARIANS' EXPENSES, WHETHER WE MUST INSIST THAT EXCHANGE BE CARRIED OUT ON BASIS THAT SENDING SIDE PAYS, OR WHETHER THERE IS ANY OTHER POSSIBILITY -- E.G., SENDING SIDE PAYS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WITH RECEIVING SIDE COVERING IN-COUNTRY EXPENSES.

C. CONFIRM THAT WE MAY PROCEED WITH THE WORKING SESSIONS USING THE BULGARIAN RE-DRAFT AS THE BAISC NEGOTIATING DOCUMENT, WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT FINAL DOCUMENT AGREED ON WOULD BE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY BOTH STATE AND USDA.
GARTHOFF

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